

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1026

By Brown

A RESOLUTION to call for a summit on the future of education in Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that members of this legislative body should convene a group of stakeholders within the State of Tennessee and engage in meaningful discussion about the direction of Tennessee's current educational system; and

WHEREAS, we recognize the Education Improvement Act of 1992 made significant strides toward addressing education problems in Tennessee that arose over the years; and

WHEREAS, we further recognize that new challenges confront the current youth of today as we prepare them to become the workforce of tomorrow; and

WHEREAS, in his speech to the National Governor's Association, Bill Gates remarked that "In the international competition to have the biggest and best supply of knowledge workers, America is falling behind," while observing that India graduated almost one million more students from college than the United States and that China graduated twice as many students with a bachelor's degree than the United States; and

WHEREAS, according to a 2005 survey conducted by the National Association of Manufacturers, 84% do not believe that K-12 schools are doing a good job and 80% are experiencing a shortage of qualified workers; and

WHEREAS, in a study of the educational system in Tennessee, the National Center of Higher Education Management Systems created what is commonly known as the "student pipeline" for Tennessee and found that of 100 9th Graders, only fifty-nine (59) will graduate high school on time, thirty-six (36) will enter college, only twenty-five (25) will be enrolled at the start of their sophomore year, and only fifteen (15) will graduate within 150% of the normal time it takes to complete the degree; and

WHEREAS, the 2004 Measuring Up report released by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education observed that while Tennessee displayed improvement in the past decade in many of their standards on the status of higher education, we still remain at or below average on every one of their measures, including grades of C-minus in Preparation, C-minus in Participation, F in Affordability, C-plus in Completion, C in Benefits, and an incomplete in Learning; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee traditionally falls behind the rest of the nation in almost every achievement standard, including high school graduation rates, NAEP scores, and percent of workforce with a bachelor's degree; and

WHEREAS, educational achievement has long linked itself to quality of living, thus causing Tennessee to fall behind the rest of the nation in many economical indicators such as per capita income, percent of families living in poverty, and the gap between what the lowest 20% of Tennesseans earn versus what the highest 20% of Tennesseans earn; and

WHEREAS, in order to fulfill the constitutional obligations that the General Assembly provide for the maintenance, support, and eligibility standards of a system of free public schools, the current system of educational delivery in Tennessee needs scrutiny and reform; and

WHEREAS, the BEP is due for an assessment of what is needed to accomplish the objectives of providing an excellent education program for all kindergarten through twelfth grade students throughout the state, providing substantially equal educational opportunities for those students, and generally providing the education funding necessary for our schools to succeed; and

WHEREAS, the federal No Child Left Behind law created a set of additional standards and requirements that Tennessee must now strive to meet; and

WHEREAS, the Household Survey of Educational Attitudes about Education of Tennesseans commissioned by the Comptroller's office and conducted and analyzed by the University of Tennessee Center for Business and Economic Research showed that more than 80% of parents expect their children to get college degrees; and

WHEREAS, the compound annual growth rate for tuition and fees at Tennessee higher education institutions exceeded 10% from 1997-98 to 2005-06, and per capita personal income in Tennessee increased at less than half that rate, thus potentially pricing many people out of higher education institutions; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Report from 2002 titled *The Big Payoff: Educational Attainment and Synthetic Estimates of Work-Life Earnings* estimated that a person who obtains a bachelor's degree will earn in excess of nine hundred thousand dollars (\$900,000) more in their work lifetime than someone who obtains a high school diploma and almost one million two hundred thousand dollars (\$1.2 million) more than a person with less than a high school degree, and a person that obtains a masters degree will earn in excess of one million two hundred thousand dollars (\$1.2 million) more in their work lifetime than a person who only obtains a high school diploma and almost one and one-half million dollars (\$1.5 million) more than a person who has less than a high school diploma; and

WHEREAS, the current system does not lend itself to meaningful dialogue about educational attainment and appropriate levels of funding, and allow for adequate accountability to the parents of students by the local school boards, the county commissions, our higher education institutes and the state policy makers; now, therefore,

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that the 2006 Education Summit of Tennessee convene on or before September 30, 2006, for the purposes of evaluating the current educational delivery system and discussing strategies to increase the high school graduation rate, increase the percentage of 9th graders that complete the student pipeline, as developed by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, and propose educational programs that will prepare the next generation for the future workplace.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the membership of the Education Summit consists as follows:

1. The officers of the House and Senate Education committees,

2. Two members of the House of Representatives and two members of the Senate appointed by the Speakers of the respective chambers,
3. The Governor or his designee,
4. The Commissioner of Finance and Administration or his designee,
5. The Commissioner of Education or her designee,
6. The Commissioner of Economic and Community Development or his designee,
7. The Comptroller of the Treasury or his designee,
8. The State Treasurer or his designee,
9. Three current superintendents chosen by the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents representing the three Grand Divisions,
10. Three current educators chosen by the Tennessee Education Association representing the three Grand Divisions,
11. Three current members of local school boards chosen by the Tennessee School Boards Association representing the three Grand Divisions,
12. Three current county commission members chosen by the Tennessee County Commissioners Association representing the three Grand Divisions,
13. Three members of local government chosen by the Tennessee Municipal League representing the three Grand Divisions and operating a school system,
14. The Executive Director of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission;
15. One President from the Board of Regents, chosen by the Board of Regents;
16. One Chancellor from the University of Tennessee system, chosen by the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees;
17. The Chancellor of the Board of Regents and the President of the University of Tennessee system or their designees;
18. One representative of private Tennessee universities, chosen by the Governor after consultation with the Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association;

19. One professor from the University of Tennessee system, chosen by the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees, provided, that such professor is a member of a faculty senate,
20. One professor from the Board of Regents, chosen by the Board of Regents, provided, that such professor is a member of a faculty senate,
21. One college student from the University of Tennessee system chosen by the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees,
22. One college student from the Board of Regents chosen by the Board of Regents,
23. Five parents of children in Tennessee's public educational system, chosen by the Tennessee PTA. The organization shall strive to respect the racial and social demographic makeup and represent each of the three Grand Divisions and shall have at least one represent elementary aged children, middle school aged children, and high school aged children;
24. Two members chosen by the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry;
25. One member chosen by the Tennessee Business Roundtable;
26. One person representing the interests of pre-kindergarten education, chosen by the Tennessee Association for the Education of Young Children;
27. Two persons from the P-16 Council, chosen by the Tennessee P-16 Council. One person shall represent the interests of higher education and one person shall represent the interests of pre-kindergarten through 12th grade education.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Governor or his designee shall convene the Summit in Nashville by the time designated above and shall appoint co-chairs at the first meeting, one of whom shall be from the legislative branch and the other shall not be part of the legislative branch. At this time, the Governor or his designee will also charge the Summit.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the co-chairs shall appoint the following committees that shall meet at least once in every grand division of the state of Tennessee:

- 1) Pre-K to 12 Committee to discuss, including but not limited to, the issues contained in this resolution relating to pre-k through grade 12 education; and

2) Higher Education Committee to discuss, including but not limited to, the issues contained in this resolution relating to higher education; and

3) Accountability Committee to discuss, including but not limited to, the issues contained in this resolution relating to the accountability structure; and

4) Education Funding Committee to discuss, including but not limited to, the issues contained in this resolution relating to funding of pre-k through 16 education in Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Summit shall analyze the K-12 achievement gaps across the state, including differences between rural, urban, and suburban achievement, as well as the differences in racial achievement. The analysis should compare how Tennessee students compare with one another, how they compare with our peer states, and how they compare in an international perspective, if available.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Summit shall analyze the accessibility and affordability of higher education. This analysis should include the cost range throughout the university system, standards and admissions requirements, and a study on caps on enrollment. This analysis should also include comparisons to peer institutions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Summit shall provide an analysis of how many high school graduates must enroll in remedial and developmental classes after they enter their post secondary educational institution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Summit shall discuss and make recommendations on how to improve, if necessary, the current testing, performance, and funding accountability structure among the state, the county commissions, the school boards, and children and parents.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Summit shall request academic research and papers or analysis, and, subject to appropriations, may request outside experts to present findings in person, or using any electronic or telecommunications means as may help the Summit complete its charge.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a website be created for live streaming of the discussion and presentations of the Educational Summit for public view.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the co-chairs of the Summit shall appear before the House and Senate Education committees as soon as practical after the 105th General Assembly convenes in January 2007 to update the committees on the progress of the Summit.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Summit shall file a report and make recommendations to create an educational system in Tennessee that will provide an adequate education and allow for equal educational opportunities for all students regardless of socioeconomic status at all levels from pre-kindergarten through post-high school degree programs no later than January 15, 2008.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all appropriate state agencies including, but not limited to, the Office of Education Accountability, the Department of Education, the University of Tennessee Center for Business and Economic Research, the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission provide staff assistance necessary for the Summit to complete its charge.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all state agency involvement and meeting coordination shall be coordinated by the Comptroller of the Treasury or, subject to appropriations, by staff as may be hired for such purpose.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Summit shall seek to maximize, to the extent possible, any non-governmental funds that may be available from organizations including, but not limited to, the Education Commission of the States, the Southern Regional Education Board, the National Conference for State Legislators or any business entity, that will help the Summit to complete its charge.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an enrolled copy of this resolution be transmitted to each the Governor, the Department of Education, the Comptroller of the Treasury, the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees, the Board of Regents, and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission with the final clause omitted from such copy.